



# City of Seattle

Gregory J. Nickels, Mayor

## Seattle Transportation

Grace Crunican, Director

*Seattle  
Pedestrian  
Advisory  
Board*

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The Seattle Pedestrian Advisory Board shall advise the City Council, the Mayor, and all departments and offices of the City on matters related to pedestrians and the impacts which actions by the City may have upon the pedestrian environment; and shall have the opportunity to contribute to all aspects of the City's planning processes insofar as they may relate to pedestrian safety and access.

City Council Resolution 28791

March 8, 2006

Mayor Greg Nickels  
Seattle City Hall  
600 Fourth Avenue, 7th Floor  
PO Box 94749  
Seattle, WA 98124-4749

Dear Mayor Nickels:

Thank you for proposing to make transportation improvements a key priority for 2006. In your "State of the City" speech you made a strong commitment to pedestrian safety and mobility, promising "a major funding package and ballot measure to meet our pressing street, pedestrian and bicycle needs." The Seattle Pedestrian Advisory Board urges you to propose a bold and visionary sidewalks and pedestrian safety program that will make a real difference as part of any transportation revenue proposal. Across the city, in every planning forum, community group and public meeting, it is clear that Seattle residents have a vision of a pedestrian-friendly city. It's time to make it happen!

Sidewalks are at the intersection of your objectives to "get Seattle moving; keep our neighborhoods safe; create jobs and economic opportunity for all; and build strong families and healthy communities." Sidewalks are the most essential form of "transportation demand management," helping to replace auto trips with walking in one's neighborhood. Sidewalks are an essential element in neighborhood safety, bringing more eyes on the street; and to public health, battling obesity by fostering an active lifestyle. They enable face-to-face interaction with our neighbors, a prerequisite for community life. When you say you want people to notice that "someone is taking care of the basics," we think sidewalks and pedestrian safety are about the basics.

It is time to propose a vision of Seattle where every street will have a sidewalk within 30 years. It is time to treat sidewalks as an equal to major highway projects, parks and libraries as a critical need, not an "enhancement" we can only afford once other basic needs are met. Sidewalks are the most basic prerequisite for a safe, walkable city, and a key reason many Seattleites choose to live here. We appreciate inclusion of funds for sidewalks in the current budget proposal, but to make a real difference will require much more.



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Pedestrian improvements are key to implementing Seattle's Comprehensive Plan and its primary urban village strategy, which would focus city infrastructure funds in areas accepting growth to make them high quality, desirable urban places. Complementary city investment in infrastructure – sidewalks, parks, libraries and public buildings – can make the difference whether density will add to livability, or worsen traffic, crime and the quality of urban life. The most basic element of the urban village strategy is to provide sidewalks, crossings, and a safe walking environment.

Please make the sidewalk and pedestrian safety element of your revenue proposal large enough to make a real difference. Consider ways to get the biggest impact from public dollars by prioritizing improvements to neighborhoods that raise a local match and by coordinating transportation and drainage investments in street improvements. But most important, please provide a significant and sustainable funding stream for sidewalks and pedestrian safety.

Sidewalks are highly desired in Seattle, and including them in a ballot measure will enhance its success. Let's make 2006 the year when Seattle sets out to make long-sought policy become reality – to make a walkable Seattle more than a policy goal.

Sincerely,

Rob Fellows  
Seattle Pedestrian Advisory Board

cc: Seattle City Council members  
Grace Crunican, Director, SDOT  
David Levinger, Feet First  
Michael McGinn, Sierra Club  
Jessyn Schor, Transportation Choices Coalition